**Reference Notes and Resources for**

**Critical Incident**and the **Family**

Presented by



nationalcops.org

wastatecops.org

**Statistics**

**Line of Duty Deaths**

 National Washington

2009 **140 7**

2010 **177 2**

2011 **176 2**

2012 **120 2**

2013 **113 1**

2014 **121 1**

2015  **33\***

\*As of 4/4/2015

**Law Enforcement Suicide**

125 - 150

**Police Victimization**

60,000 assaulted annually

16,000 injuries

Statistics

**Death Benefits**

**State: $ 231,959\***

Education Benefits

**Federal: (PSOB) $ 339,310\***

Education Benefits

**\*As of 4/4/2015**

**PSOB Hometown Heroes benefit**

heart attack, stroke or vascular rupture

**PSOB Disability benefit**

permanent and total disability

**NO** PSOB benefit shall be paid if:

1. Intentional misconduct, or Intent to cause death/injury
2. Voluntarily intoxicated
3. Grossly negligent performance of duties

Benefits

**Line of Duty Death - LODD**

**Principles of Death Notification**

In person

In time

In pairs

In plain language

With compassion

**Care of the Family**

The department’s actions may actually increase the level of trauma experienced by the family

**Family Survivors:**

59% experience PTSD

No difference ‘tween felonious & non-felonious

Trauma **increased with judicial proceedings** - trial, sentencing, appeals, etc.

**Agency must consider:**

Notification

Support

Info for/to the family

Help with claims

Answer to questions

How they talk to the family

 **How do you talk to the family?**

Say I’m sorry

Use the death words – dead, died, killed

Give truthful answers to questions

Be truthful to children – age appropriate

LODD

**Grief = Acute → Chronic**

**Grief is a normal by-product of death and trauma. We don’t do grief in our culture, so we don’t recognize normal grief responses.**

 **Acute:**

* + Numb, flat feeling
	+ Isolation
	+ Tightness in the throat
	+ Chest pain
	+ Chronic illnesses
	+ Sleep disorders
	+ Nightmares
	+ Depression
	+ Alcohol & drug abuse
	+ Flashbacks
	+ Complete lack of energy
	+ Empty feeling in one’s stomach even after eating
	+ Anger and coldness to others
	+ Tremendous guilt , even if irrational
	+ **Talk of SUICIDE** Take him/her seriously!

 **Chronic:**

* + Memories
	+ Loss of hopes and dreams
	+ New events trigger old losses – the officer’s child is born after his death
	+ Holidays, birthdays, anniversaries
	+ Reluctance to start new relationships

LODD

**Co-Worker Reaction to LODD**

Grief

Anger

Fear

Numbness

Guilt

ANGER:

When extreme anger is in the mix of emotions, things can get out of control: poor reactions, bad decisions

Stay aware of your emotions, including your anger. If you see it, you can work with it.

GUILT:

Survivor guilt

Not rational when the co-worker did not actually cause the LODD

**You are human beings before, during, and after your law enforcement career, so expect to have human reactions.**

LODD

**Critical Incident Stress**

**STRESS**

is an everyday occurrence in every occupation and at every age.

**TRAUMA**

is physical as well as emotional, damage is actually done to the brain.

**3 sources of stress and traumatic stress:**

**On the streets** Source of traumatic stress

**Within the Dept.** Greatest source of basic stress

**Within the family** Can tip the scale

**Terrible 10 Critical Incidents:**

1. LODD
2. LOD injury
3. Multiple deaths/injures
4. Death or serious trauma to children
5. Death/injury to someone you know

6. Fellow worker suicide

7. Prolonged incidents

8. Excessive media incident

9. Emotionally significant events

10. Officer involved shootings

Stress

**Stress Symptoms**

**Physical:**

* Sleep disorders
* Muscle tremors
* Fatigue
* Chills/sweating
* Nausea
* Shock symptoms
* Gastro-intestinal distress
* Hyper vigilance
* Difficulty breathing
* Chest pain
* Cardiac arrest
* Visual difficulties

**Cognitive**

* Memory loss
* Concentration problems
* Anger
* Anxiety
* Fear
* Grief
* **Depression**
* Helplessness / Hopelessness
* Feeling overwhelmed
* Nightmares
* Poor decisions
* Flash backs

**Behavioral**

* Change in behavior
	+ Withdrawal
	+ Acting out
	+ Eating excesses
	+ Increased alcohol consumption
	+ Aggressiveness
	+ Inability to rest
	+ Intensified startle reflex
	+ Restlessness
	+ Emotional outbursts

**Cumulative**

* Exhaustion
	+ Apathy
	+ Job performance deterioration
	+ Fatigue
	+ Depression
	+ Feels unappreciated
	+ Paranoid
	+ We vs. They
	+ Extreme cynicism
	+ Psychosomatic behaviors
	+ Omnipotence
	+ Abuse of medications
	+ Abuse of alcohol
	+ Unacceptable behavior
	+ Domestic abuse

**Stress**

**PTSD**

* + - * Trauma lasts longer than 30 days
			* The stresses just got to be too much
			* A bad event involving:

 Friends/family

 LODD/LOD injury

 Children

Not all critical events are “big” ones

1. PTSD is a physical injury to the brain—*it is just as physical as a concussion and it is real*.

 a. There are clear, measureable [physical changes](http://religion-of-one.org/ptsd/ptsd-global-synopsis.html) that immediately begin taking place to the hippocampus**,** which controls learning, memory, stress and our emotional responses to fear. The hippocampus actually decreases in mass and begins to atrophy.

b. The amygdala, the “fear center” of the brain, becomes overactive

1. “Those who have PTSD have abnormal levels of stress hormones. Studies show that individuals with PTSD have lower levels of cortisol than those who do not have PTSD and higher than average levels of epinephrine and norepinephrine. The above three mentioned hormones are **responsible for creating the "flight or fight" response** to stress. In turn, this means that the person with PTSD lives in constant "flight or fight" mode

1. [Researchers believe](http://www.thedoctorwillseeyounow.com/content/stress/art1964.html?getPage=3) that the medial prefrontal cortex, which regulates emotional and fear responses, becomes dysfunctional.

1. **Simply put, PTSD alters levels of numerous stress related chemicals and hormones that would otherwise maintain emotional and decision-making balances in the brain. This can easily trigger depression, commonly raising the likelihood of suicide.**

Stress

**PTSD Symptoms**

* Changes in normal behavior
* Disregard for safety
* Self-medication
* Drinking
* Abuse of power
* Sick humor – suddenly a new behavior
* **Depression**
* Absenteeism
* Thoughts of changing jobs
* Substance abuse
* Feelings of hostility
* Estrangement
* Sleep disorders
* Flashbacks
* Guilt about surviving
* Poor Concentration
* Intrusive thoughts
* **Suicidal thoughts**

**Stress Relief Valve**

Breathe

Exercise

Eat healthy meals

Rest

Avoid alcohol and illegal drugs.

Limit TV trauma and violence

Develop interests and friendships outside law enforcement

TALK

**Don’t make any life-altering decisions for 30 days after a traumatic event Stress**

**Basic and simple economic and business**  **practices:**

1. Protect your life, loved ones, and possessions
	1. Enough insurance on you AND spouse
		1. Value of stay-at-home parent $118,905 (salary.com)
	2. **Not likely to die in LOD – don’t pauperize your family**
2. Spend less than you earn
3. Save enough for emergencies
4. Save now for your retirement
5. Fill out “Financial Diary”

6. Have a will, power of attorney for finance, power of attorney for health matters, and other legal documents

* 1. Free Will/Estate Planning Clinics www.willclinic.org/home.html
	2. Children living with ex-spouse – trust him/her to properly manage the children’s benefits?
	3. Financially challenged? A money klutz?
	4. Adoption issues
1. Have a plan, review it annually and update it as your circumstances change
	1. Personnel file – keep up to date

Stress

**Law Enforcement Suicide**

**125 - 150 annually**

**90% of police suicides are with their SERVICE WEAPON.**

**ALCOHOL is present in 85% of police suicides.**

2010 stats: suicide rates for:

 general public 11 / 100,000

 police 17 / 100,000

 Army 20 / 100,000

*Per Badge of Life - a Police Mental Health Foundation:*

2008 police suicides: 141

2009 police suicides: 143

2012 police suicides: 126

 Profile of suicide cases:

Average age, 2012:   42

Average yrs on job:   16

 91 percent of suicides were by males.

Ages 40 – 44 were most at risk.

Time on the job:  15 – 19 years were most at risk.

63 percent of suicide victims were single.

11 percent of suicides were veterans

*per National P.O.L.I.C.E. Suicide Foundation:*

**#1 reason** = loss of identity

 *‘What I do’ becomes ‘Who I am’*

 *NOT a healthy philosophy*

**#2 reason** for suicide = relationship issues

Police Suicide

**Top 10 reasons for LEO suicide:**

* + - * 1. Death of child or spouse
				2. Terminal illness
				3. Failed relationships
				4. Fear/anticipation of arrest
				5. Sexual accusations
				6. Being jailed or imprisoned
				7. Responsible (perceived) for partner’s death
				8. Arrest/ indictment
				9. Feeling alone

10. Loss of job/conviction of crime

**Risk for officers:**

Shift work

Never off duty

High stress work environment – murder, rape, danger, etc.

Physical and emotional strain from dealing with one crisis after another

Weapon is identity

Availability of weapon

High incidence of alcohol

**Officers won’t seek help because:**

Lack of trust in department help system (employee assistance programs)

Confidentiality issues

They fear their reputation will be perceived as “weak”

They don’t recognize that they have PTSD

They are ashamed of their feelings

They don’t know how to get help

Police Suicide

**Suicide indicators / progression**

Exposure to **high stress** - murder, rape, danger, etc.

 Starts drinking with peers after work

 Becomes cynical and **depressed**

 Doesn't trust administration

 Tries to maintain "Macho"

 **Drinking** increases - pressure mounts

 Job performance begins to drop off

Problems with **relationships**

Disposes of assets

 **SuiCIDE**

**3 Questions to ask:**

1. Are you thinking about killing yourself?
	1. If “YES” Stay with the person and call **Code4NW** or **Safe Call Now** or suicide prevention hotline
2. Have you decided how you are going to do it?
	1. If “YES” Stay with the person and call **Code4NW** or **Safe Call Now** or suicide prevention hotline
3. Do you know when you plan to commit suicide?
	1. If “YES” immediately take person to professional help. DO NOT leave him/her alone at this point.

Police Suicide

**Additional Resources:**

**Statistics:**

odmp.org

http://www.fbi.gov/news/pressrel/press-releases/fbi-releases-2011-statistics-on-law-enforcement-officers-killed-and-assaulted

http://www.dupont.com/industries/safety-protection/law-enforcement-protection.html

https://www.bja.gov/Publications/BVP\_FS.pdf

**Federal Benefits:**

https://www.psob.gov

https://www.psob.gov/benefits\_by\_year.html

www.psob.gov/files/PSOBRegs2013.pdf

https://www.psob.gov/file\_death\_claim.html

https://www.psob.gov/file\_education\_claim.html

https://www.psob.gov/file\_disability\_claim.html

https://www.bja.gov/Programs/psob/HH\_Guide.pdf

**Washington Benefits:**

<http://www.leoff.wa.gov/default.htm>

http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2009-10/Pdf/Bills/House%20passed%20Legislature/1679-S.PL.pdf (disability)

**Stress & Trauma:**

[www.badgeoflife.com](http://www.badgeoflife.com/)

<http://www.visionsofcourage.com>

[www.policeone.com](http://www.policeone.com) search Stress & Trauma

**Police Suicide:**

www.psf.org

[www.badgeoflife.com](http://www.badgeoflife.com)

Book – “My Life for Your Life” by Sgt. Clarke A. Paris, Las Vegas Met PD (ret)

**Crisis Help:**

www.code4nw.org

[www.safecallnow.org](http://www.safecallnow.org/)

**Free Wills/Estate Planning:**

http://www.willclinic.org/home.html